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Item 10 of the provisional agenda

Selection of topics for seminars to take place during the 2018 CES plenary session

Selection of topics for the seminars to be held during the 2018 plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

In May 2017, UNECE carried out an electronic consultation with the members of the Conference of European Statisticians on the possible topics for the seminars to be held during the 2018 plenary session of the Conference. The list of topics sent for consultation has been regularly updated, based on the proposals from countries and recommendations by the Bureau.

A total of 49 countries and international organizations replied to the consultation. They were invited to select topics for seminars, indicate whether their office would be willing to organize a seminar/session and/or prepare a paper on a specific topic, and also to propose additional topics.

The present note provides a summary of the replies received. Based on the outcome, the Bureau will make a proposal to the Conference for a decision to be taken on the 2018 seminar topics on 21 June 2017 under agenda item 10.

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I. Introduction

1. This year 49 countries and international organizations replied to the electronic consultation on topics to be discussed at the seminars of the 2018 plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES). The following countries and international organizations (IOs) replied: Albania, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Kingdom, Ukraine, United States, Eurostat, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

2. The results of the consultation are presented below. The countries and organizations that offered to organize a seminar/session or to present a paper are listed under each topic.

3. In addition to voting on the topics, several countries proposed additional topics for CES seminars, as follows:

- (a) Digital economy – measurement and communication (Canada);
- (b) The rise of the machines (two views: what and how to measure and adoption in statistical practice) (New Zealand);
- (c) Use of administrative data and decreasing the response burden (Tajikistan).

II. Results of the survey: preferences

A. Topic (D) Getting our message across: Strategic reflections on modernizing communication with citizens

4. This topic received the highest number of preferences: 34 votes (32 from countries and 2 from international organizations). Albania and Montenegro offered to be seminar or session organizers. The Netherlands could be a session organiser. Australia, Belgium (possibly), Germany, Israel, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, United States and Eurostat (possibly) offered papers on this topic.

Comments made

5. Finland highlighted the importance of this theme, particularly considering the increasing digitalization, as the borderline between official statistics and all kinds of data is increasingly blurred. Regarding digitalization, Finland suggests two main questions: (i) how to define and understand digitalization; and (ii) how to react to the challenges in front of us. In addition, Finland suggests the following sessions: (i) 'Picture this!': How to make our data and statistics more informative to the users (pictures, infographs, videos, podcasts, etc.); and (ii) 'Internet of Things': How to collect, process and analyse digital data (methods, tools, partnerships).

6. The Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) Netherlands offered to explain its communication strategy and the steps it took to become a modern news organization, including the establishment of "CBS Live" with its own TV studio, modern equipment and facilities.

B. Topic (F) Measuring what matters – broadening official statistics

7. The topic received 28 votes (26 from countries and 2 from international organizations). Poland offered to be a session or seminar organizer. The Netherlands could be a session organiser. France, Israel, Netherlands, Sweden (possibly) and United States offered papers on this topic.

Comments made

8. The Netherlands can deliver a paper on their experience with working with external (commercial) partners, for instance in the CBS Center for Big Data Statistics and Urban Data Centers.

C. Topic (A) Challenges in environment statistics

9. The topic received 12 votes from countries. Germany could organize the seminar. Australia, Canada, Germany and Sweden offered papers on this topic.

D. Topic (E) Breaking spatial barriers – from transboundary issues to neighbourhood statistics

10. The topic received 10 votes (9 from countries and 1 from an international organization). Canada, Poland and Sweden offered papers on this topic.

E. Topic (C) Challenges in measuring intergenerational relationships

11. The topic received 9 votes from countries. France offered a paper on this topic.

F. Topic (B) Can data save lives? – Official statistics for disaster risk reduction

12. The topic received 4 votes from countries.

III. Conclusions

13. The CES Bureau will discuss the results of the electronic consultation, including the proposed new topics, and will present a proposal to the Conference on the 2018 seminar topics. The Conference will decide about the topics on 21 June 2017 under agenda item 10.